

RAB AND RINGAN.

A TALE.

AS DELIVERED IN THE PANTHEON,
EDINBURGH.

(Recited in the Character of a Poor Pedlar)

BY THE
AUTHOR OF WATTY AND MEG.

To which is added,
THE TWA CATS AND THE CHEESE.

A TALE.

DEMONSTRATING
THE GREAT FOLLY OF GOING TO LAW.

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[The following Tale was recited by the Author, at the
Pantheon, in a Debate on the Question, "Whether
Diffidence, or the Allurements of Pleasure, the greater
BAR to Progress in Knowledge."

RAB AND RINGAN.

A TALE.



INTRODUCTION.

HECH! but its awfu' like to rise up here,
What sic a sight o' learnt fouks pows appear!
Sae many piercing een a' fixt on ane,
Is maist enough to freeze me to a stane!
But its ae mercy, mony thanks to fate,
Pedlars are poor, but unco seldom blate.

(Speaking to the President.)

This question, Sir, has been right weel dispute
And meikle, weel-a-war's been said about it:
Chiels, that precisely to the point can speak,
And gallop o'er lang blauds of kittle Greek,
Hae sent frae ilka side their sharp opinion,
And peel'd it up as ane wad peel an ingon.

[The question had been spoken to on both sides before
Tale was recited, which was the last opinion given
on the debate.]

I winna plague ye lang wi' my poor spale,
 ut only crave your patience to a *Tale* :
 y which ye'll ken on whatna side I'm stinnin',
 s I perceive your *binmost minute's* rinnin'.

THE TALE.

N. There liv'd in Fife, an auld, stout, warldly chiel,
 Wha's stomach kend nae fare but *milk* and *meal* ;
 wife he had, I think they ca'd her *BELL*,
 and twa big sons, amais't as heigh's himsel'.
 RAB, was a *gleg, smart cock*, wi' *pouther past*,
 RINGAN, a *slow, feart, bashfu' simple bash*.

Baith to the College gaed. At first, spruce RAB,
 A Greek and Latin, grew a very *dub* :
 he beat a' roun' about him, fair and clean,
 and ilk ane courted him to be their frien' ;
 nae house to house they harl'd him to dinner,
 ut curst poor RINGAN for a *bum-drum* sinner.

RAB tauked now in sic a lofty strain,
 as tho' braid Scotland had been a' his ain,
 he ca'd the *Kirk* the *Church*, the *Tirth* the *Globe*,
 and chang'd his name forsooth, frae *Rab* to *Bon*.
 whare'er ye met him, flourishing his rung,
 he hale discourse was murder'd wi' his tongue.
 his friends and faes wi' impudence he set,
 and ramm'd his nose in ev'ry thing he met.

The College now, to RAB grew dous and dull,
 he scorn'd wi' books to stupify his skull ;
 he whirl'd to *Plays* and *Balls*, and sic like places,
 and roar'd awa at *Fairs* and *Kintra Races* :

Sent hame for filler frae his mither BELL,
 And cast a horse, and rade a race himsel';
 Drank night and day, and syne when mortal fo'
 Row'd on the floor, and snor'd like ony fow;
 Lost a' his filler wi' some gambling sparks,
 And pawn'd for punch, his Bible and his sarks;
 Till, driven at last to own he had enough,
Gaed hame a' rags, to baud his Father's plough.

Poor *bum-drum* RINGAN, play'd anither part,
 For RINGAN wanted neither wit nor art:
 Of mony a far-aff place he kend the gate;
 Was deep, deep learn'd, but unco, unco blatt.
 He kend how mony mile 'twas to the moon,
 How mony *rake* wad lave the ocean toom;
 Whare a' the swallows gaed in time o' snaw;
 What gars the thunder roar, and tempest blaw;
 Whare lumps o' filler grow aneath the grun;
 How a' this yirth rows round about the sun;
 In short, on *books* sae meikle time he spent,
 Ye cou'dna' speak o' ought, but RINGAN kent.

Sae meikle *learning*, with sae little *pride*,
 Soon gain'd the luve o' a' the kintra side,
 And *Death*, at that time, happ'ning to nip aff
 The *parish minister*—a poor dull ca'f,
 RINGAN was fought—he cou'dna say them nay
 And there he's preaching at this vera day.

MORAL.

Now, Mr. PRESIDENT, I think it's plain,
 That *youthfu' diffidence* is certain gain.
 Instead of blocking up the road to knowledge,
 It guides, alike, in *Commerce* or at *College*;

struggles, the bursts of passion to controul,
 needs all the finer feelings of the soul;
 defies the deep-laid stratagems of guile,
 and gives *even innocence a sweeter smile*;
 annobles all the little worth we have,
 and shields our virtue even to the grave.

How vast, the difference then, between the twain!
 since *pleasure* ever is pursu'd by *pain*.
Pleasure's a *Siren*, with inviting arms,
 sweet is her voice, and pow'rful are her charms;
 hur'd by her call, we tread her flow'ry ground,
 Joy wings our steps, and *Musick* warbles round;
 hush'd in her arms, we lose the flying hours,
 And lie embosom'd midst her blooming bow'rs,
 Till—arm'd with *death*, she *watches* our *undoing*,
snatches, while she *sings*, and *triumphs* in our *ruin*.

END OF RAS AND RINGAN.

THE
TWA CATS *and the* CHEESE

A TALE.

"*Law is a draw-well unco deep,*
"*Without a rim, fouk out to keep,*
"*Whan drunk—a donnart chiel may dreep*
 "*Fu steely in,*
"*But finds the gate baith stay and steep*
 "*Ere out he win."*

FERGUSON,

TWA Cats anes on a cheese did light,
To which baith had an equal right;
But disputes, such as aft arise,
Fell out, in sharing of the prize.

Fair play, said ane, ye bite o'er thick,
Thae teeth of yours gang wond'rous quick;
Lets part it, else, lang or the moon
Be chang'd—the keback will be done,

But wha's t' do t' ?—They're parties baith,
And ane may do the ither skaith.

With joint consent, awa they trudge,
And laid the cheese before a Judge :
A Monkey, wi' a *campstool* face,
Clerk to a Justice o' the Peace ;
When he his master's chair had fill'd,
A Judge he seem'd, in justice skill'd ;
And umpire chosen, for division,
With sware to stand by his decision.

Demure he looks—the cheese he pales—
Pees—fin's it gude—ca's for the scales ;
His knife whops throw't—in twa it sell ;
Syne puts each ha'f in either shell :
Solemnly says—" We'll weigh the case,
And strictest justice shall have place.

Then, lifting up the scales, he fand
The tane bang up, the tither stand ;
Syne out he took the heaviest ha'f,
And ate a knooft o't quickly af,
And try'd it syne,—it now prov'd light,
" Friend cats," said he, " we'll do you right."

Then to the tither ha'f he sell,
And laid till't toughly tooth and nail,
Still, weigh'd again, it lightest prov'd.
The Judge, wha this sweet process lov'd ;
Still weigh'd the case, and still ate on,
Till clients baith, were weary grown ;
And tenting how the matter went,
Cried, " Come, come, Sir, we're bail's content."

"Ye fools," quoth he, "But justice too
 "Maun be content as well as you."

Thus grumbled they, thus he went on;
 Till baith the halves were neer hand done.
 Poor Pouster now the daffin' saw,
 Of gawn for nignyes to the law;
 And begg'd the Judge, that he wad please
 To give them the remaining cheese:
 To this his Worship grave, reply'd,
 "The dues of Court, maun first be paid;
 "And justice pleas'd:—What's to the fore
 "Will scrimpily do to clear your score.
 "That's our decreet—Gae hame and sleep,
 "And thank us ye've win aff sat cheap."

MORAL.

"Then, tho' at odds, wi' a' the warl',
 "Amang oursel's we'll never quarrel,
 "Tho' discord gie a cankar'd snarl
 "To spoil our glee,
 "As lang's there's pith into the barrel,
 "We'll drink and gree."

FINIS.

